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Exporting to Mexico-Managing Border Entry Issues

Report Categories:

Exporter Guide

FAIRS Subject Report

Livestock and Products

Poultry and Products

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Report Highlights:

U.S. exporters shipping food and agriculture products to Mexico may encounter problems during the border entry process. To avoid problems, exporters should ensure that their product meets applicable Mexican import regulations, has the proper certification, and is correctly labeled. In addition, exporters should use an experienced freight forwarder and Mexican customs broker. In the event that a shipment is detained or rejected, the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Monterrey, Mexico, can assist exporters in clarifying the problem and determining how best to proceed in resolving the issue.

Executive Summary: Shipments of U.S. food and agricultural products to Mexico may encounter problems during the border crossing and inspection process. The purpose of this report is to provide exporters a guide on managing border entry problems.

General Information:

Disclaimer: This report was prepared by the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Monterrey, Mexico, for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped. Final import approval of any product is subject to the importing country's rules and regulations as interpreted by border officials at the time of product entry.

Introduction

Shipments of U.S. food and agricultural products to Mexico may encounter problems during the border crossing and inspection process. The purpose of this report is to provide exporters a guide on managing border entry problems. Documentation errors account for over ninety percent of border entry problems. Other issues that can result in the detention or rejection of shipments include violation of sanitary and phytosanitary requirements and non-compliance with labeling regulations. This guide outlines steps exporters should take in the event that an export shipment is detained, and explains how ATO Monterrey can assist exporters in resolving border entry problems.

Avoiding Border Entry Problems

Keys to avoiding border entry problems include:

- Verify product eligibility
- Verify compliance with Mexico's labeling regulations
- Confirm that certificates and accompanying documents contain accurate product information and updated sanitary/phytosanitary information and requirements

The use of an experienced freight forwarder and Mexican customs broker is recommended and can assist the exporter in meeting the above criteria to avoid border entry problems. The freight forwarder and/or customs broker can determine the eligibility of a product and verify that it meets Mexico's sanitary/phytosanitary requirements, as well as labeling and other applicable requirements. The freight

forwarder and/or customs broker can also detect problems before the product crosses into Mexico and, in many cases, can correct the problem. The FAS Mexico FAIRS (Food and Agricultural Import Regulations) Country Guide and Export Certificate reports contain information on Mexico's import requirements (see *Other Relevant Reports* section below).

Problem Solving Guide

If a shipment is detained or rejected during the border entry process, U.S. exporters and Mexican importers can contact the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Monterrey for assistance in resolving the problem. Before contacting the ATO, however, the exporter/importer should establish communication with the freight forwarder and/or customs broker to gather the following information, which will help the ATO render assistance:

1. Location of product and border entry point. Is the product on the U.S. side of the border, or has it crossed the border? If the product is still in the United States, what is the contact information for the freight forwarding company responsible for crossing the product? If the product has crossed the border, what is the contact information for the Mexican customs broker?
2. Nature of the issue. Is the product held on the U.S. side because it lacks or has incomplete documentation? Is product held on the Mexican side because it lacks or has incomplete documentation? What are the Mexican authorities requesting? Are Mexican authorities requesting a replacement certificate or additional statements and /or amendments to an export certificate? Is product detained on the Mexican side because the documentation does not attest to compliance with current Mexican import requirements or is the product held due to sanitary or phytosanitary issues?
3. If the product is rejected by Mexican agricultural inspectors, the exporter or importer should obtain a copy of the "RTI", also known as the *Registro de Trámite de Importación*. This document is issued by Mexican agricultural inspectors verifying that the product complies with Mexican import regulations. If a shipment is rejected, the Mexican inspector will explain the reason for the rejection on the RTI. The Mexican customs broker is normally the best source to obtain the RTI.

Report the issue to ATO Monterrey via email or phone once the above information is obtained, along with any relevant documents such as export certificates and contact information for freight forwarders and Mexican customs brokers responsible for crossing the product. ATO staff will help the exporter/importer to clarify the nature of the problem to determine how best to proceed in resolving the issue.

Returning Meat and Poultry Export Shipments to the United States

Meat, poultry and egg products returning to the U.S. must meet requirements defined by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) as well as FSIS. The FSIS Office of International Affairs (OIA) must approve the request to return U.S. exported meat, poultry, and egg products. For more information please visit the FSIS website for returned shipments:

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations & Policies/Export Products Returned to the United States/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_and_policies/Export_Products_Returned_to_the_United_States/index.asp)

Contact information for the USDA Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) in Monterrey, Mexico:

From the United States:

Telephone: 011-52-81-8333-5289

Fax: 011-52-81-8333-1248

Within Mexico:

Telephone: 01-81-8333-5289

Fax: 01-81-8333-1248

Email. atomonterrey@usda.gov

For More Information

FAS/Mexico Web Site: We are available at www.mexico-usda.com or visit the FAS headquarters' home page at www.fas.usda.gov for a complete selection of FAS worldwide agricultural reporting.

FAS/Mexico YouTube Channel: Catch the latest videos of FAS Mexico at work

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ATOMexicoCity>

Other Relevant Reports Submitted by FAS/Mexico:

Report Number	Subject	Date Submitted
MX0514	Mexico FAIRS Export Certificate Report	12 / 10/ 2010
MX9325	Mexico FAIRS Country Report	8 / 17 / 2009
MX1509	Up Date Principal Border Entry Points for U.S. Agricultural Exports	3/09/2011

MX8502	Principal Mexican Northern Inland Border Entry Points for US Agricultural Products	8 / 28 / 2008
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Useful USDA Websites:

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS): www.fsis.usda.gov

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS): www.aphis.usda.gov

Useful Mexican Web Sites: Mexico's equivalent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (SAGARPA) can be found at www.sagarpa.gob.mx and Mexico's equivalent to the U.S. Department of Commerce (SE) can be found at www.economia.gob.mx. Mexico's equivalent to FSIS and APHIS (SENASICA) can be found at: www.senasica.gob.mx. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) which regulates imports of forestry products including seeds and wood products can be found at: www.semarnat.gob.mx. Mexico's Agency for Environmental Protection (PROFEPA), which also inspects imported wood products, can be found at www.profepa.gob.mx. The Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risk (COFEPRIS) which regulates imports of processed products can be found at: www.cofepris.gob.mx. Mexico's Customs Agency (ADUANAS), can be found at: www.aduanas.gob.mx. These web sites are listed for the readers' convenience but USDA does NOT in any way endorse, guarantee the accuracy of, or necessarily concur with, the information contained on the mentioned sites.